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POPERY; ITS RISE AND RUIN.

If any spot on earth is more worthy of veneration than another, it is Jerusalem. No other locality has associations so sacred. With no other city is the history of the Saviour so closely connected. His footsteps may still be traced in its streets. His miracles have rendered memorable its places of public resort. Its very atmosphere still vibrates with the wonderful words which fell from His lips. We may visit the scene of His agony, and with penitential, adoring gratitude, we may gaze on "the place which is called Calvary." We may see "the place where the Lord lay" in the embrace of death, and from which He arose the first fruits of them that sleep. In imagination we may accompany Him and his disciples to Bethany, and, having listened to his last words, behold him ascend to the right hand of God. Surely, if any locality has a claim to be considered the metropolis of the Christian world it is Jerusalem, the Holy City. But by a series of remarkable events, the attention of Christendom has been directed to Rome, and the Holy City has had a far less share of our regard than that which has been proudly called "Eternal."

This fact is by no means difficult to account for. Rome is the residence of an apostate minister of Christ, who has dared to usurp the prerogatives of his Master. He says he is Christ's vicar,—the living representative of the Lord Jesus; that his power is as great, his authority as sacred, and his wisdom as infallible as that of the Saviour himself. He tells us that he is above kings, and that there is not one of them but ought to receive the crown from his sacred hands. He assures us that he has supreme authority over all Christian ministers and all Christian men, and that if we commit ourselves to his guidance we cannot be wrong, and that if we reject it we cannot be right. He declares that it depends upon his will whether we enter the gates of heaven, or are thrust down to hell. Strange to say there are 130,000,000 of earth's inhabitants who believe in these monstrous pretentions, and have the settled conviction that their happiness, present and future, is in the hands of the Pope and his ministers. Can we wonder, then, that their hopes and fears are fixed on Rome? From Jerusalem, the sacred presence has long since departed; but they affirm that in the Eternal City, from age to age, it visibly abides in the person of the Holy Father.

Whence comes this strange power? Is it from heaven, or of men? Of course the Pope, the priests, and the people who believe in them, endeavour to make out for it a Divine original. They affirm that Peter, by the direct authority of Jesus Christ, was Prince of the apostles; that he was founder and first bishop of the Church at Rome; that the Pope is his successor, and by the will of the Saviour inherits his powers. Upon these assertions rest the extraordinary claims of the papacy. Let us look at them.

It is affirmed that Peter was endowed with supreme authority over his fellow apostles. The text upon which this doctrine is based is as follows:—"Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. xvi. 18-19). It will be observed that there are three things here:—he is to be in some sense the foundation of the church; he is to have the power of binding and loosing; and he is to have the keys of the kingdom of heaven. In two of these things it is clear that Peter had no pre-eminence. Paul accords the same honour to all the apostles. We learn from him that the church is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone" (Eph. ii. 20). And if we turn to Matt. xviii. 18, we find the Saviour conferring the power of binding and loosing on each of them without distinction,—"Verily I say unto you, whatsoever *ye* shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever *ye* shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." In neither of these particulars, whatever they may involve, was Peter exalted above his fellows. There remains only the power of the keys. We admit, at once, that this was peculiar to him, but in a sense very different from that in which Romanists regard it. For a simple and beautiful illustration of the words "I give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven," we have only to turn to the earliest records of the preaching of the gospel. On the day of Pentecost, Peter *opened* the kingdom of heaven to the Jews when he said "Repent, and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." And in like manner he opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. Rising above the prejudice common to the rest of the apostles, he was the first to preach to them in the house of the Roman Centurion the unsearchable riches of Christ. In this sense, and it is the only possible one, Peter could have no successor.

It is hardly necessary to remark that, with the above exception, Christ placed all the apostles on a level (Matt. xx. 25-27); that Peter received commissions from his brethren, rather than they from him (Acts viii. 14); that they call him to account for preaching to the Gentiles (Acts xi. 1-3); that Paul withstood him to the face (Gal. ii. 11); and expressly affirms his own equality with "the very chiefest apostles," (2 Cor. ii. 8); every one of which particulars, shews that Peter was not endowed with supreme authority over the church of Christ.

But it is said that, at least, Peter was the founder and first pastor of the church at Rome. We dispute the statement. The evidence of the New Testament is opposed to the supposition that he was for any length of time a resident at Rome. If he was pastor of the church there, what necessity was there for Paul to write an epistle, giving instruction and advice? If Peter was there, they had already one in their midst whose wisdom and authority was equal to his own. And then we find in the same epistle a long list of salutations:—"Greet Priscilla and Aquilla," "Salute Andronicus and Junia," &c.,—but there is no salutation for Peter, an omission which could not possibly have been made had he been there. A few years later Paul was a prisoner at Rome, and during his captivity he wrote several epistles, but there is no mention of his fellow-apostle being in the same city. He was at length set at liberty, and becomes a second time "an ambassador in bonds." He then writes his second epistle to Timothy, and speaks of Demetrius and Crescens, of Titus and Luke, as having been, or still remaining at Rome, but makes not the slightest

reference to the so called "Prince of the apostles," a circumstance utterly incredible on the supposition that Peter, with or without the dignity ascribed to him, had his abode in the Imperial City.

After what has been said, we need not devote more than a sentence or two in reply to the assertion that Christ intended Peter's supremacy to be inherited by the Bishops of Rome. Supposing Peter to have been endowed with all the powers claimed for him, it seems likely that about the transfer of prerogatives, so unutterably important to the universal church, something would have been found in the New Testament, yet, we are not aware that there is a single sentence which, by any fair interpretation, can be made to say that the authority of the apostle Peter was to be exercised through all time by the Bishops of Rome. This papal inheritance of apostolic powers is an entirely groundless assumption. Peter had no superiority over his brethren; he was not first Bishop of the Church of Rome, and there is no evidence that Christ intended even the powers he did possess to descend to any successor whatever.

It would be very easy to shew, did space permit, that the papal power instead of being a divine institution, is a noxious growth. We discover its first manifestations side by side with the early blossom of the tree of life, the full development of which it has done so much to hinder. We can hardly read with attention the epistles of Paul without perceiving the operation of principles, which in later times have been known as popery. Idolatry was stealing into the church (1 Cor. x. 14); there was "voluntary humility and worshipping of angels" (Col. ii. 18); a vain observation of festivals (Gal. iv. 10); a distinction of meats, (1 Cor. viii. 8); a neglecting of the body (Col. ii. 23); undue regard to the commandments and traditions of men, (Col. ii. 8, 22); and Diotrephes loved to have the pre-eminence. To trace the development of these early errors to their culmination in "the mystery of iniquity" would be too long a story for these pages. Let it suffice to say that it was not until the lapse of many centuries that the Pope was recognised as the Head of the Church, and that it took a still longer period to raise him to a temporal sovereignty, the first honour being conferred upon him in 606, and the second in 756. Yet the adherents of the papacy have the effrontery to talk of the rights of the fisherman of Galilee; the divine authority of the Prince of the apostles; the patrimony of Peter! The truth is, that for a thousand years and more, they have succeeded in maintaining one of the most gigantic impostures the world ever saw.

It is very natural to enquire what prospect there is of the termination of a system so utterly alien to Christianity? The mere fact that its foundations are laid in falsehood is a sufficient guarantee that sooner or later it must perish. But we have, in addition, the assurance of the word of God that the papacy is destined to ultimate ruin. It is our belief that this is foretold by Paul when he says,—"Whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming": by Daniel when he tells us that "he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws, and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times, and the dividing of time; but the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and destroy it unto the end" (Dan. vii. 25-26); and by John, when he declares that the period during which the Holy City shall be trodden under foot is limited to forty and two months, or 1,260 days (Rev. xi. 2-3). There can hardly be a doubt that the period mentioned in this various phraseology, is that during which the church is to suffer from the usurpation of popery, and that the time indicated is 1,260 years. If we knew when to date the beginning of the reign of "the man of sin," we might come to some conclusion about the period of its termination. The title of "Universal Bishop" was given to the Pope in the year 606, and, reckoning from that date, it would bring us to 1866 as the period at which anti-Christ would cease to reign. But if we reckon from the year 756, when the Pope became a temporal prince, the termination of his reign is postponed to a much later period. It ill becomes us, however, to dogmatise about dates.

"It is not for us to know the times and the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power." One thing is tolerably certain, namely, that the process of destruction is going on. It began at the Reformation. A despised monk dared to assert that men were saved not by pains, and penances, and pilgrimages, but by faith in Jesus Christ, and his words fell "like a flaming thunderbolt" upon the heart of the papal system, inflicting a wound that never has been healed, and never will. It was continued in the French Revolution. At one blow the power of the priesthood was taken away, their wealth confiscated, the temporal power of the Pope extinguished, and he himself carried into captivity by Napoleon. And, though in the course of events he returned to Rome, and was once more reinstated in his dominions, the process of exhaustion has ever been going on. In 1848, "the great crowned priest," before whom, kings had turned pale, fled from the presence of his justly enraged subjects. Forced once more by foreign bayonets upon an unwilling people, he had, for a short time, a precarious tenure of power, to be recently all but destroyed by the advancing tide of liberal opinions in Italy. And now we behold him dependant upon the protection of France for the merest shred of that territory, which but a little while ago acknowledged his sway. Nor can we for a moment suppose that this phantom of papal power is destined long to haunt the scenes of its former glory. The "eldest son of the church" would only be too glad, did political exigencies allow him, to utter the word which would send it to its final repose, and relieve the world of the hideous nightmare, by which it has too long been oppressed.

Let us not think, however, that when the priest at Rome has ceased to be a king, anti-Christ is ruined. The overthrow of the temporal power is only one stage in the decreed process of consumption. The errors upon which popery is based are too prevalent and too deeply seated to be uprooted by any storm that may assail the Pope's civil power. Men who, to spare themselves the trouble of thinking, take upon trust the teachings of others; who live in neglect of religion, under the impression that at the hour of death the prayers of a minister will be a passport to heaven; or who attribute saving efficacy to rites and ceremonies, rather than to the mediation of Jesus Christ; no matter by what name they may be called, are papists at heart. Such persons abound everywhere. Human nature finds it pleasant in its perplexing enquiries after truth, to have on earth an infallible guide. Sinners of every name feel it much easier to transfer the keeping of their souls to another, than to engage personally in a life-long struggle with evil. It is far more agreeable to believe that Baptism or the Lord's Supper, rather than repentance and faith gives a title to eternal life. Popery is too much in harmony with the tastes and wishes of the unregenerate heart, to be destroyed suddenly or soon; and the probability is that, as long as there are men on earth who have not felt the transforming power of the Holy Spirit, popery will have a name and a place among the nations.

J. J.

JOTTINGS OF THOUGHTS ON THE "PILGRIM'S PROGRESS."

THE middle and closing part of the 17th century, was an age of great names—a constellation of brilliant stars, among which Bunyan's shone as one of the first magnitude. This great expositor of the believer's inner life, possessed but little learning; we can scarcely call him a book-worm, when only five works constituted his library before writing his immortal allegory. These were—"The Plain Man's Pathway to Heaven," "The Practise of Piety," (his wife's dowry), "Luther on the Galatians," "Fox's Book of Martyrs," and the "Bible." As Dr. Cheever remarks:—"He scarcely knew the philosophical meaning of the word logic any more than a breathing child knows the place of its heart, or the movement of its lungs; but Bunyan wrote the Pilgrim's Progress for all that; which, indeed, is itself the sweet logic of Celestial Love."

In these jottings of thoughts on Bunyan's great work, we must imagine that we have the aid of the artist's pencil, and hence the following paragraphs will

come before us as so many scenes. The Pilgrim's Progress is eminently artistic, and as far as the pen can take the place of the pencil, we purpose so to use it.

SCENE I.

In this picture of the great allegory, the writer appears before us as having laid himself down, and as fast asleep. In the course of his slumbers he dreams, and his dreams are very vivid and expressive. He beholds a man clothed with rags,—an emblem of sin, standing in a certain place, his face from his house, a book in his hand, (the Bible), and a great burden on his back. The heavy weight he carries, is intended to symbolise a heavy oppression which rested on his conscience, because he had been such a transgressor. Hence as he read, he wept and trembled, and, not being able to contain his feelings, he broke out in this agonising enquiry—"What shall I do?"

Bunyan when he thus presents his Pilgrim for the first time, no doubt thought of the three thousand on the day of Pentecost, who were pricked to the heart by Peter's sermon, and perhaps of the Philippian jailor. To us they call up to mind the stanza of Milton, suggestive of the self accusation of Satan for his perfidy in heaven:—

"Me miserable! Which way shall I fly?
Infinite wrath and infinite despair?
Which way I fly is hell; myself am hell;
And in the lowest deep a lower deep
Still threatening to devour me opens wide,
To which the hell I suffer seems a heaven."

But the man described was but a photograph of Bunyan himself. Do you wish to know what Bunyan was before his conversion? Imagine the following picture: There is near to Bedford the village or hamlet of Elstow, containing about fifty houses, scattered here and there in picturesque confusion. It is the close of the Sabbath Day in the summer season, when all living creatures, excepting men, are gone to rest. The sun has lit up the horizon with his golden beams, and the distant hills are tinged with his glory. But in the outskirts of this village there is a noisy party playing at pitch and toss. The most insolent and rude among them is a young man about eighteen or nineteen, having about him all animation and life. His dress is poor, and his person by no means clean. Indeed he looks like a tinker. As the coppers are thrown into the air, he is all anxiety to know the result. Should the pieces fall to his liking, there is a hearty and teasing laugh; but should he lose, there comes out an awful oath, and he raves like a madman.

Bunyan in describing the sins of his early life, makes special mention of Sabbath-breaking, with swearing, lying, and cursing the name of God. And these habits became so confirmed, that they were a second nature to him. But he could not continue to sin with an easy conscience, and hence he became alarmed by ugly dreams. He tells us in his "Grace Abounding," that whilst in a game of cat, having struck it one blow, and about to give it another, a voice was heard from heaven which said—"Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to heaven, or have thy sins and go to hell." In this way God was convincing the man of his danger, and forcing the enquiry—"What must I do?"

SCENE II.

In this second picture we see Christian in his house, surrounded by his family. He preserves silence as long as he can as to his convictions and determination, till he can keep his inward conflict and purpose a secret no longer. Accordingly he breaks his mind to his wife and children in the most pathetic strains. He speaks of his wife, as his dear wife, and his children, as the children of his bowels. Thus showing, that divine grace destroys none of the instincts of nature, nor at all deadens parental affection. So far is it from this, that those who are most pious, are the most affectionate, and give the strongest proof how much they love their own. How impressive is the scene before us! Grief is

depicted in Christian's countenance, big tears roll down his manly face, his words can scarcely find an utterance, and he seems like a man baptised in sorrow. His children stand amazed, his wife appears a churl. There is no sympathy with his grief, because they do not understand the cause. They set it all down to some frenzy distemper, and think the best thing they can do is to get him to bed. But bed does him no good, for he is worse in the morning, and can only moan, and pray, and weep. Now here two remarks are suggested. What strange mistakes people make as to the causes of sorrow. Many a person has been thought to be bereft of reason, when under convictions of sin and concern for their soul. Hence such persons have been sometimes sent to an asylum, and placed under the care of an unfeeling keeper. But a little time has shown that it was not the brain so much as the conscience that was diseased, and all they required was the healing medicine of the gospel.

Then again, how much is there in the teaching of God's word to deepen convictions, and to intensify desires for salvation. The guilt of sin, the temptation of Satan, the wrath of God, and the torments of the damned, are no mere dreams and pictures. As sure as the lightning flashes; as sure as the thunder peals; as sure as the boisterous ocean swallows up the bark, and the simoon blast of the desert overtakes, and often buries the traveller,—so sure is every unconverted soul in danger of eternal ruin, and of being lost in the depths of an unfathomable perdition. Who can marvel, then, that poor Christian should be anxious to escape from a city which was doomed to destruction, and of getting rid of a burden which was crushing his very soul.

SCENE III.

In the scenic representation now before us, we have introduced an important personage known by the name of EVANGELIST. He looks venerable and grave; his beard and his robes also give a dignity to his person, and he comes before us both as a man of God, and a minister of the gospel.

It is generally supposed that Bunyan, when he introduced this friend of his Pilgrim, had in his mind, holy John Gifford, his pastor, who had been so useful in explaining to him more perfectly the way of salvation. But no doubt Evangelist stands for all faithful ministers who point sinners to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world.

In the house of the Interpreter you will remember that the first scene which Christian saw was a picture of a very grave person which hung against the wall. His eyes were uplifted to Heaven—implying that God was the source of his dependence, and the object of his supreme affections; the best of books was in his hand—meaning the Bible; the law of truth was on his lips—implying that the faithful minister is sincere; the world was behind his back—in other words not a ruling power with him; it stood as if it pleaded with men, beseeching them to be reconciled to God; and a crown of gold was over his head, as if to say—your reward is not in this life, but in the life to come. All this description reminds us of the stanza of Cowper:—

> "Would I describe a preacher, such as Paul
> Were he on earth, would hear, approve, and own,
> Paul himself should direct me. I would trace
> His master-strokes, and draw from his design.
> I would express him simple, grave, sincere;
> In doctrine uncorrupt; in language plain,
> And plain in manner; decent, solemn, chaste,
> And natural in gesture; much impress'd
> Himself, as conscious of his awful charge,
> And anxious mainly, that the flock he feeds
> May feel it too; affectionate in look,
> And tender in address, as well becomes
> A messenger of grace to guilty men.
> * * * * *
> Behold the picture!—

(To be continued.)

THE ENGLISH PULPIT.

The English Pulpit ought to be a mighty power for good, but it evidently is not what it should be. In England men are free to think and free to speak their thoughts. This freedom has been the birthright of the people for ages and they enjoy it now in all its fulness. It is the habit of the public mind, and the people are capable of being influenced by mind-power to any degree. But where is the modern mind-power to influence them? It is not in the pulpit. The House of Commons is the platform of the nation, and he who is a real thinker and orator if he gets there, can command the attention of the whole nation and influence the whole people. But where is the national pulpit? Where is the national preacher? There is not one such man in all England! We have our Spurgeon of London, our Parsons of York, and our Close of Carlisle; but where is the preacher who has a national influence, a national reputation, a national power? For such a man we look everywhere, but look in vain. The English nation is composed of a religiously inclined people. Thousands upon thousands of them are willingly and heartily subject to religious ideas, religious motives, religious actions. They are quick to see, generous of feeling, benevolent of means and energy. They are open to mighty impulse to mighty deeds. There is no people in the world more capable of being moulded to good works than the people of England. And yet where are the mighty men to inspire them? Where are the great, broad, powerful orators to lead them and fashion them to the image of God in Christ Jesus? We seek them in vain. This is a calamity, it is a dreadful woe, and the kingdom feels it, and sleeps because it is so. The pulpit is, professedly, the symbol of the church power of the kingdom, but this symbol has no oracle in it to stir the souls of the people. England has her national church system: this system is rooted in the hearts of her millions. This system has vast revenues of silver, and gold, and honour, and place, and power, and glory. And yet it has no Paschal, no Massillon, no Saurin! It has no Luther, no Knox, no Zwingle, no Melancthon. It has no mighty man of valour to hold the sword of the Spirit and to conquer the people to God. The Omnipotence of the mind is gone; the quivering thrilling energy of thought is gone; the swaying influence of the pulpit has ceased to be. England is living in a religious night. All the luminaries she can boast of are a few stars of ordinary lustre that glimmer here and there between the clouds of her night. This is a terrible truth. It is awful to contemplate, it bodes ill for England. What are our schools doing in our days? Where is the potent moral influence of our universities, our colleges, our seats of learning? What are the classics doing for us? What is science doing towards elevating the souls of the people? What is philosophy doing for the broadening, deepening, and purifying the spirits and the life of the kingdoms? Alas, what are we gaining from logic and all the masters of art? Let us give to these all the glory due unto them; but still let us ask, what spiritual good is coming to the world by their aid? Hath God made "foolishness" of all these! Is he repeating the olden issue of human wisdom, and turning it all into vanity? O, how do the spirits of the Godly people yearn for the delayed effusion of the Holy Spirit! Still, it is true that, *when* He shall come He shall teach us all things. O that he would come and make the pulpit and the preacher a power of God unto salvation. The field of vision open to the eyes of the modern preacher is as wide as the world. It includes all the wonderful works of God, and all that God has done is divine. The history of the world is the history of God, and all that he has done, as well as all he is doing, bears the glorious impress of Divinity, and is, therefore, worthy of the recognition and exposition of the pulpit, and might be an inexhaustible magazine of thought, of wisdom, of eloquence and power. The Bible traverses this vast field of boundless treasure; it revels in the grand old traditions that memorise the events that transpired around the very cradle of mankind;

it gladdens the heart of the artizan, the mechanic and the musician, and inspires them in their work; the shipbuilder is brought into contact with God and miracle in the ark; the poor tent maker is elevated to joy in the work of the tabernacle, and triumphs in an apostle working at the trade, and the carpenter who planed the cedars for the temple sees the God-man, Christ Jesus, sanctifying the bench and tools of the joiner's shop! And so it is with the student, he rises into a sublime occupation when at work, as in the halls of the schools of the prophets. So the poet may rise in his raptures with Isaiah and David. Verily, this whole field of thought, and skill, and genius, and wisdom, and rapture might be re-vivified, and become again inspiring, if the soul of the Bible, if the Spirit of life, and if the abounding grace of truth were but to fall on the pulpit. Where is the limit of the spirit of power if that spirit would take up the body of the material that is lying at the feet of the preacher? Look at the wisdom of the past; at the traditions of the hoary ages that now are being regenerated into the youth they once lived on the earth, in the glowing East. Harken! a voice, perhaps 300 years old, is now heard from the Zend-Avesta, and it utters the cry of the modern men: "That I will ask Thee, tell me it right, thou living God! Who is holding the earth and the skies above it? Who made the waters and the trees of the field? Who is in the winds and storms that they so quickly run? Who is the Creator of the good-minded beings, Thou Wise?" These ancients asked who protected from evil, and they answered the question, saying the "I am"; "The best purity"; the "I am Wisdom" the "I am Knowledge"; the "Living," and the "I am who I am."* Yes, so it is now as it was in the beginning: it is God, and knowledge, and wisdom, and purity, and life, that must lift up, and build up, and bless the world and glorify the God of truth.

IOTA.

THE USEFUL PREACHER.—No. 1. "THE WHOLE FAMILY."

"Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named."—EPH. iii. 15.

IT must be a well-known fact to every reader of the New Testament, that the Church of Christ is represented therein under a variety of interesting esimilitudes, such as *flock*, *vineyard*, *temple*, and in the text a *family*. This appropriate figure is frequently made use of by the sacred writers to set forth the Christain Church. We are informed that God is our father. This very name carries with it the family relationship of necessity—Father,—children,—and brethren, bring the whole family before us. "And I will be a father unto you—and ye shall be my sons and daughters saith the Lord." Many families have been bereaved of their father—"but our Father is in heaven." Many children lament the death of elder brothers—but our elder brother "ever liveth to make intercession for us."

THIS FAMILY—

I. IN ITS NUMBER—The whole family.

II. IN ITS UNITY—The whole family in heaven and earth.

III. IN ITS RELATION TO GOD THROUGH JESUS CHRIST—Of whom the whole family, &c.

I.—THE FAMILY IN ITS NUMBER.—We should do well to bear in mind in starting that the words of our text represent this family—of whomsoever composed—as existing at the same time both in heaven and the earth. The place of abode has not so much to do in assisting us to form a correct notion of its number. Moral character is the grand line of demarcation between the family of God and the world. If any one on account of his religion were cast into the dark cell of a prison—that would no more exclude him from being one of the family of God than if he dwelt in one of the best palaces in the world.

* MAX MÜLLER'S Chips from a German workshops.

In the text we are informed that a part of the family *resides* in heaven, and the other part on earth.

Where is the arithmetician that can give us the exact number of those already redeemed? The family of God in heaven includes an innumerable host of spiritual intelligences denominated angels, seraphim, cherubim, thrones, principalities, and powers. These holy, undefiled, and spotless creatures compose a part of the family of God in heaven, and who are continuously praising him with a loud voice exclaiming "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty."

This portion of God's family is highly interested in the new displays which he has given of his character in his dealings towards what we call *our world*. At the creation they were represented as "Morning stars singing together," and "Sons of God shouting for joy." And on the important occasion of giving the law on Mount Sinai some thousands of them were present; when God was manifested in the flesh at Bethlehem a great multitude of the heavenly host joined Gabriel in proclaiming "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, and good will toward men." These hallowed, spotless beings form a part of the family in heaven. Among those also who make up the number of this part of the family must be included all that have died in infancy, together with those who have died in the *faith*. During the period of more than six thousand years vast multitudes must have died, exclaiming—"Christ is all." From righteous Abel to the present hour many sons and daughters have been received to glory. All belong to the family in heaven. "We never call in question the salvation of infants." The number of children on earth by this time are very numerous. They are composed of all true believers—those who fear God and keep his commandments.

II. This Family in its Unity—Many members, but one body.

1. They have only one Head.—Angels and the redeemed in heaven, together with all believers, acknowledge but One Head, namely, Jesus Christ, who is Head over all things. This is clearly and emphatically taught in the "New Testament." Christ is said to be at the right hand of God in heavenly places. "Far above all principalities and powers, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come,—and hath put all things under his feet, and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the Church." In another epistle referring to Christ, the apostle said in addressing the brethern—"And ye are complete in him, who is the head of all principality and power."

One in Employment—We know something from the testimony of the Scriptures of their glorious employment. "And I beheld" says John "and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts, and the elders, and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands—saying with a loud voice "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and blessing." I believe brethren, that it would not be too much for me to say, that there are thousands on earth this day, who are at the same employment. They are not already perfect, but they wish to follow after, gradually forgetting the things that are behind.

One Family in Interest—In this they practically prove that they love one another. There is no hostility between the children in the family of God. The branch on earth holds intercourse with that in heaven, through the medium of holy desires and devout meditations, until they meet in everlasting union. The branch in heaven ministers to the saints on earth—rejoice in their happiness—encamp round about them in danger, and when they die, they bear them on their wings to glory. Hence the apostle referring to angels says—"Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation.

III. This Family in its Relation to God through Jesus Christ.—For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Of

whom, &c. The branch in heaven and earth can only claim a relationship to their common Father, through Jesus Christ—"He is the way, the truth, and the life, &c." "He is the grand meeting place of believers." It is delightful to meditate on their future re-union. They are now scattered through every corner of the world. They shall be called home by and bye. What a multitude! In that august assembly complete harmony of opinion, feelings, and union, will be enjoyed. Patriarchs, prophets, apostles and martyrs, Jews and Gentiles, will be bound for ever to the throne of God, by the mighty power of love, centering in Christ the elder brother.

THEIR MORAL AND INTELLECTUAL CHARACTER IN THEIR FINAL HOME—All bright, unerring, burning with love, standing before God without fault! Always happy. For ever so. No tears, but an eternal song of rapturous joy.

"Come let us join our cheerful songs
With angels round the throne;
Ten thousand thousand, are their tongues,
But all their joys are one."

[Our brother Jenkins who has kindly supplied us with the above sermon, in a note accompanying it says:—The preacher referred to is the late Rev. Benjamin Lewis, Minister of the Gospel at Bethel Chapel, Merthyr Tydfil. His life and labours will shortly appear before the public in the Welsh language, and it is our purpose to publish some of his sermons through the medium of your valuable magazine, the *Primitive Church*, so that our English friends by this means may be able to come in contact with the purity of mind which characterises every thought that came from his rich and noble pen. We have thought it advisable to publish them through your Magazine, because our departed brother was a constant reader of it. He was also a strict communionist, and all the sentiments of his soul are in harmony as such with yours. This "Useful Preacher" was not a learned man, but he was mighty through God, for the salvation of a great many souls. He has left an example behind, which will tell for good upon every one that knew him. Nothing was wanted in order to love him dearly but to know him.]

SEEKING THE LORD EARLY*

"Those that seek me early shall find me."—PROV. viii. 12.

YOUTH is a most important period of life. It bears the same relation to manhood that the tender shoot bears to the future tree, or that the blossom bears to the fruit, or that the Spring bears to the Autumn, or that the morning bears to the evening, or that time bears to eternity. If the tender bud should be crooked and unhealthy, where would be the prospect of a large and graceful tree? If the blossom should be scanty or should be blighted, where would be the prospect of an abundance of fruit? If the Spring should be attended with much frost and snow, where would be the prospect of large and yielding crops in the time of harvest? If the day should never dawn, how could we expect to see the evening? If a man's life should be one continued scene of immorality and debauchery, how could such a man expect a happy eternity? So if youth should be wasted, if the moments should be unimproved, if a youth should spend his days like a Hottentot or an Arab of the desert, how could such a youth be followed by an intelligent, a happy, and a useful manhood and old age? A certain writer says,—"If the Spring puts forth no blossoms, in Summer there will be no beauty, and in Autumn no fruit; so if youth be trifled away without improvement, manhood will be contemptible, and old age miserable!" God is willing to receive and to bless the humblest and the youngest that seeks his face. For their encouragement he declares,—"Those that seek me early shall find me."

It is important in noticing the above words to inquire, what are we to understand by seeking God and seeking him early? We

* A Sermon to the young, preached in the Baptist Chapel, Little Leigh, Cheshire, on Lord's Day, January 5th, 1868.

seek something which we have lost, or something that we imagine is to be found. And have we lost God, inquire a multitude of voices? Is not His presence universal? Does it not appear in every twinkling star, in every ray of light, in every opening flower, in every breeze that blows, in every dew-drop, and in every blade of grass; and is it not He who loads us with all the bounties that we enjoy? Lost God! how can it be? Man has not lost God as the God of Providence, as a Ruler, or as a Judge. In all these senses God maintains his prerogative. There are, however, senses in which God is not enjoyed. The favour, the likeness, and the approving presence of God are lost.

We may imagine a servant in the palace of a king, who enjoys his royal favour, who is admitted into his royal presence on common and special occasions, and who, by frequent contact with the king, becomes assimilated to his ways. Such a servant is blessed. Few enjoy such a privilege. But you may imagine such a servant becoming leagued with conspirators, and in the end, being a party to forward a scheme designed to upset the throne. The plot is discovered, and what is the result? That servant is at once driven from the palace, from the approving presence of the king, is cast into prison; he lies beneath the frown of the king, and becomes assimilated to the likeness of the prisoners. This illustrates the case of man. Once, man enjoyed the approving presence, the favour, and the likeness of God. How happy was he then! How blessed to enjoy the smiles of God's face! But alas! in an evil hour man became leagued with the great enemy, he became a party to a scheme designed to overthrow the government of God. What was the result? Man was driven from the approving presence of God, from his favour, and fell from his likeness, and now lies beneath the curse of the law. In these senses man has lost God.

Again, seeking God supposes a sensibility that he is lost. No man ever begins to seek till he is sensible that there is something lost, or that there is something to be found. The great reason why multitudes seek not God, is because they do not see that He is lost. The eyes of the understanding are darkened. They feel not their fearful depravity, or the distance which exists between them and God. They feel not the curse which rests upon them. But when the Holy Spirit shines into the mind of any man, whether he be young or old, that man sees. He sees his sinful nature, he sees how sinful has been his life, he sees that because of sin he is exposed to the curse of the broken law, and to the misery of the lost. A man sensible that he has lost his purse, begins to seek it. It may have been lost many days; but he has not sought it till now, because he has not been sensible of his loss. Now that he is sensible, he seeks; so a man sensible that he has lost the likeness, the friendship, and the approving presence of God, begins to seek for them. He feels he must either seek or perish. Again, seeking God supposes effort. A woman that has lost a precious jewel, sweeps the house, she lights a candle, she looks into every box, and in every dark corner where she has the least possible idea that it may be. A diseased man seeks for a remedy. He tries one prescription after another. A merchant anxious for goodly treasures, visits market after market. He searches till, if possible, he finds. A digger for the precious gold, digs day after day till, if possible, he finds. So a man, sensible that he has lost God, seeks. He seeks in the word of truth, in the means of grace, by fervent and importunate prayer, and by a living faith in the crucified Redeemer. Thus seeking he finds.

Again, there is encouragement in the above words to those who seek early. Let not young people dream that they are to wait till they attain a state of manhood, or old age, before God will condescend to hear their prayer. He loves to hear the prayer that flows from a broken and a contrite heart, even of a youth. The younger the seeker is and the better. "Suffer little children to come unto me," said Christ, "and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Multitudes have sought, and have found Christ, even in youth. He never despises the prayer of any because they are young. "Those that seek me early shall find me."

There are some reasons why the Lord should be sought early. By seeking him early, it will be understood early in life. There are important advantages which flow from seeking God, in Christ, in old age; but special advantages which flow from seeking him early. If a youth has found God, he is the subject of holy enjoyment. There are but few men but what at times are brought into solitary and sober reflection. If a youth can find when he comes to weigh himself in the balances of the sanctuary, that he is reconciled to God, that God is his Father and his Friend, how blessed must he be. He may be poor, but he is immensely rich. He may be the son of a beggar, but he is the son of a king. He may be penniless, but he is the heir of "an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away." His enjoyment is unspeakable.

Again, a youth who finds God is preserved from the results of a life of immorality. A youth who seeks not God, is "without God and without hope." Such a youth may be regardless of God, of his word, his worship, his house, and his ways. He may associate with malicious companions, he may become intemperate and profligate, and then the results follow:—poverty, misery, the workhouse, the gaol, and, in some melancholy cases, the gallows. These are some of the results of sin in this life; but the harvest of sin will be reaped in the future world. There will be weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth. All these will be the results of sin. But those who seek God early are made partakers of the divine nature, they abhor and forsake the evil way, they walk in the way of righteousness, and their life is one of peace, prosperity, and terminates in eternal glory. To be thus preserved is an incalculable blessing.

Again, if God is sought early, there is the greater prospect of usefulness in life. If a man should begin in old age to seek God, it is a mercy. God will not cast him away. But his life and his strength are gone. Whereas, if an individual be brought to a knowledge of the truth in early life, he has life before him. He may improve his talents and opportunities, and be useful in the church and in the world. Most men who have been useful, either as ministers or missionaries, have been converted to God in early life.

If a person be converted to God in early life, he will be preserved from much remorse. A child was once told by his father that, when he did wrong, a nail would be driven into a post, and when he did what was right, he might pull one out. A great many nails were soon in the post. But the boy began to struggle to get the nails removed. After a time they were all gone. The father was just about to praise his child, and, stooping down to kiss him, he saw the tears rolling down his cheeks. The father said, "why my boy, why do you cry? are not all the nails gone?" "Oh, yes," said the boy, "*but the marks are left.*" If a person should be converted in old age, his sins will be all forgiven through the death of Christ, but the marks, of which he will be ashamed, will be left. Whereas, being converted in early life, seeking and serving God in youth, the holes will, at least, to a large degree be prevented.

Again, seeking God early, we are prepared for what is considered the worst. In these days of explosions and wrecks, when there is so much danger to life and property, and especially as we know not that we shall live to see to-morrow, it is a matter of the highest moment to enjoy the consciousness of reconciliation to God. Dying then, is to be delivered from a world of sin and sorrow, to be raised to a world of purity and joy. Again, if a person seeks not God in early life, there is a probability that he never will. There is some truth in the old illustration of a tree. The tender bud may be easily bent, but the oak that has stood the blasts of generations, is difficult to bend. So, if God be not sought in early life, if the heart should become hard, and the conscience seared, he may not be sought in old age. Those who never seek will perish. May it be ours to seek and to find.

Fragments and Choice Sayings.

THE PRAYING PREACHER.

The godly Welsh preacher, Mr. Williams, of Wern, said: "The old ministers were not much better preachers than we are; in many respects they were inferior, but there was unction about their ministry, and success attendant upon it, but now seldom seen. And what is the cause of the difference? They *prayed* more than we do. If we would prevail and have power with men, we must first prevail and have power with God.' It was on his knees that Jacob became a prince; and if we would become princes, we must be oftener and more importunate upon our knees." He loved to tell an anecdote of Rev. Mr. Griffith, of Carnarvon, who was to preach one night in a farm house, and some time before the service began, wished to retire to a private room. He remained there some time after the congregation assembled. As their was no sign of the preacher making his appearance, the good man of the house sent the servant to request him to come, as the people had been some time waiting. On approaching the door she heard what she supposed to be a conversation carried on between two persons in rather a subdued tone of voice. She stood listening at the door, and heard one say to the other, "I will not go unless thou come with me." The girl returned to her master and said, "There is some one with Mr. Griffith, and he tells him that he will not come unless the other accompany him. I did not hear the other make a reply, so I conclude he will not come from there to night." "Yes, yes, he will," said the good man, "and the other will come with him, if matters are as you represent them. We shall begin the service by singing and reading till the two come." At length Mr. Griffith came, and they had an extraordinary meeting that night. It proved the commencement of a powerful revival in the neighbourhood, and many were converted to God. "Nothing, brethren," Mr. Williams would say "is necessary to render our ministry as efficient and successful as that of our fathers, but that we should be brought to the same spirit and mind."

ANECDOTE OF HUME.

An amusing anecdote is told of Dr. Robertson, Scotland, who, with a ready wit, drew an illustration from a misfortune of David Hume, to point an argument. It was as follows:—

The celebrated Mr. Hume wrote an essay on the sufficiency of nature; and the no less celebrated Dr. Robertson, on the necessity of revelation, and the insufficiency of the light of nature. Hume came one evening to visit Robertson, and the evening was spent on the subject. The friends of both were present, and it is said that Robertson reasoned with accustomed clearness and power. Whether Hume was convinced by his reasoning or not, we cannot tell; but at any rate, he did not acknowledge his conviction. Hume was very much of a gentlemen, and, as he rose to depart, bowed politely to those in the room, while, as he retired through the door, Robertson took the light to show him the way.

"O, sir," he continued, "I find the light of nature always sufficient," as he bowed on.

The street door was opened, and presently, as he bowed along the entry, he stumbled over something concealed, and pitched downstairs into the street. Robertson ran after him with a candle, and, as he held it over him, whispered softly and cunningly, "You had better have a little light from above, friend Hume" and raising him up he bade him good night and returned to his friends.

WANDERING THOUGHTS.

Many vain intruders tease me more at such seasons as I most desire to be freed from them; they follow me into the pulpit and meet me at the Lord's table. I hope I do not love them, or wish to lodge them! Often in my prayers some idle fancy buzzes about me, and makes me forget where I am, and what I am doing. I compare

myself to a man upon his knees before the king, pleading for his life, or returning thanks for some great favour; in the midst of his speech he sees a butterfly; he immediately breaks off, leaves his speech unfinished, and runs away to catch the butterfly. Such a man would be thought mad; and my vile thoughts prove that I am not free from spiritual insanity. Is it so with you? I believe it is at some times, and in some degree, though I hope you are not so bad as I. As we all spring from one stock, though our features differ, depravity is the common family likeness which runs through the whole species; but Jesus came into the world to save sinners; he died for us, and

"His hands infected nature cure,
With sanctifying grace."

We hope in a little time to see him as he is. Then, and not before, we shall be completely like him; and while we are here, his precious blood cleanses us from all sin, and makes our defective services acceptable to God.—*John Newton.*

WHITHER BOUND.

A NOBLE ship, fully freighted with a rich cargo. Her sails are set, the wind is fair; she is sailing swiftly on the broad ocean; everything betokens her onward progress in a prosperous voyage. She is hailed by another vessel.

"Ship ahoy! whither bound?"

"Nowhere."

The question is supposed to be misunderstood, and is repeated. The answer comes:—

"Don't know."

"Have you a captain?"

"Yes, but we don't mind his orders."

"Have you a chart, a compass, a chronometer?"

"Yes, but we never use or look at them."

Young man, onward bound on the ocean of life, how does this compare with your experience, your prospects, your destination, as a candidate for immortality?

"WHOSOEVER."

"WHOSOEVER will, may come." "I thank God," said Richard Baxter, "for the word *Whosoever*. If God had said that there was mercy for Richard Baxter, I am so vile a sinner that I would have thought He meant some other Richard Baxter; but when He says, *whosoever*, I know that includes the worst of all Richard Baxters."

TWO FATHERS TO BE PLEASED.

THE following incident, related by Rev. Samuel Kilpin, a Baptist minister at Bedford, of his son, may be instructive to some of our young readers who are troubled when they have offended their earthly parents. Mr. Kilpin says:—

On one occasion when he had offended me, I deemed it right to manifest displeasure; and when he asked a question about the business of the day, I was short and reserved in my answers to him. An hour or more elapsed. The time was nearly arrived when he was to repeat his lessons. He came into my study and said, "Papa, I cannot learn my lessons except you are reconciled; I am very sorry I have offended you; I hope you will forgive me; I think I shall never offend again."

I replied, "All I want is to make you sensible of your fault; when you acknowledge it, you know I am easily reconciled with you."

"Then, papa," said he, "give me the token of reconciliation, and seal it with a kiss." The hand was given, and the seal most heartily exchanged on each side.

"Now," exclaimed the dear boy, "I will learn Greek and Latin with any body;" and was hastening to his study.

"Stop, stop," I called after him; "have you not a heavenly Father? If what you have done has been evil, He is displeased, and you must apply to Him for forgiveness."

With tears starting in his eyes, he said,—"Papa, I went to Him first; I knew that except He was reconciled I could do nothing." As the tears fast rolled down his cheek, he added, "I hope He has forgiven me; and now I am happy!" I never had occasion to speak to him again in tones of disapprobation.

Obituary.

MRS. SARAH LORD, OF STACKSTEADS.

THE subject of this brief sketch enjoyed in early life the advantages arising from the instructions and example of pious parents. Her father, the late Mr. D. Greenwood, (a notice of whose death appeared in the *Primitive Church Magazine* for January, 1867), was for several years a deacon of the church at Waterbarn; and her mother, who was a member of the same church, departed this life in holy peace and triumph, surrounded by a numerous family, in the month of July, 1863. As in many other instances, so in the case before us, the seed thus early deposited, watered by Divine influence, brought forth the fruits of early piety. On one occasion during her last illness, our friend referred with deep emotion and fervent gratitude to the spiritual benefits which she had derived from the efforts of her beloved mother and her maternal grandmother, to lead her while yet a little child to the feet of Jesus. While on a visit to the latter, she (the grandmother) had often taken her little grandchild by the hand and led her to her chamber, where simple but earnest prayers were offered on her behalf, and these prayers and the instructions which she had received had never been entirely forgotten. In 1851, shortly after the writer's settlement at Waterbarn, our dear young friend came forward with another to tell what great things God had done for her soul, and to seek admission to the fellowship of the church. On September 28th, when about seventeen years of age, she was baptised by the writer at Irwell Terrace Chapel, Bacup, the friends then meeting in that place, together with those at Waterbarn constituting at that time one church. From that day to the period of her decease, her conduct and conversation were such as to *adorn* her Christian profession. As a *child* she learned to shew "piety at home," endearing herself both to her family and to all who knew her by the meekness and gentleness of her character. In the month of November, 1856, she was united in marriage to Mr. David Lord, and her subsequent career both as a wife and as a mother afforded a beautiful illustration of the blessed influence of early piety in fitting its possessor for the duties and responsibilities of domestic life. The writer recalls with pleasure the happy seasons enjoyed in spiritual conversation and prayer with her and her family at the domestic hearth. Her chief delight was in speaking or hearing about spiritual things, and however busily engaged in the concerns of her household, she would never permit these interviews to close without prayer. Her love to the house of God and to the services of the sanctuary was most ardent. Often in delicate health, yet her place in the house of God was never vacant, except when circumstances compelled her absence from it. Her prevailing desire was that her dear little ones might be brought early to know and to love the Saviour. It was fondly hoped that her precious life might be spared until she had realised the fulfilment of her wishes. But God in his mysterious but all wise Providence had decreed her early removal to another and a better world. In the early part of October, 1867, she gave birth to a twin son and daughter, and from the state of her health previously, great anxiety was felt by her friends as to the issue. Earnest prayers both in public and in private were offered for her recovery, and for a time we hoped, though almost against hope, that her life might yet be spared. At length, however, it became too evident that her life was drawing to a close; and though all the means which affection could dictate, or which medical skill could accomplish were unremittingly applied, her strength gradually but surely declined. It was under these circumstances that the gracious principles implanted in her heart by the Divine Spirit shone forth with resplendent lustre and beauty. From the very commencement of her illness she

was enabled to repose with calm and holy confidence in the arms of her Saviour. At first there was a struggle in the maternal heart, and at times a pang of sorrow at the thought of leaving her two helpless babes and four other little ones bereft of the love and care which only a mother can bestow. But the sustaining and consoling grace of God enabled her to triumph even over this difficulty, and to say from her very heart, "Father, not my will, but Thine be done." In one of the frequent interviews which her pastor had with her she said, "I have felt it very hard work to leave my dear husband and children, but God has made me quite willing now to give them up into his hands. As for myself I have no fear of death; my path for some time past has been somewhat rough, but HE is making it smooth for me now." She then added with great emphasis, "But do not think that I am boasting of myself—I am nothing, nothing but a poor sinner saved by grace. I have nothing to rest upon but the precious blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ." As in health, so in sickness, her chief delight was in reading and hearing the word of God and in prayer. After every exercise of this kind she expressed her gratitude for our visits, and the holy pleasure and consolation which she derived from these precious seasons of communion with God. Tuesday, November 19th, was a day never to be forgotten by those who were privileged to visit her sick chamber. To all human appearance she was rapidly sinking in the arms of death. She herself also thought that her end was near at hand. In the possession of all her mental faculties (which continued unimpaired even to the last moment) she called her family around her. First she gave to each of her six little ones a mother's dying blessing, accompanied with a farewell present. Then she bid adieu to her beloved partner and her dear brothers and sisters, addressing them one by one in the most solemn and affectionate manner and expressing her hope that she might meet them all in heaven. Having thus "set her house in order," she addressed herself to the solemn work before her. At times she appeared as if entirely absorbed in silent communion with God, giving expression occasionally to ejaculations such as these, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." "Open, open the gates, and let a poor sinner in." Then at intervals she would engage in brief conversation with her pastor and other friends, and request prayer to be offered on her behalf. On asking her if she felt quite happy and comfortable in the prospect of death, she replied, "There is no sting at all in it; it is all taken away." Thus the day passed, and towards midnight, to the surprise of all she appeared to rally a little. On the next day she was enabled to converse with great freedom, and on referring to the blessed experience of the previous day she exclaimed, "I really thought that I was close by the gate of heaven, and waiting for it to be opened that I might enter in." A few more days however of toil and conflict were allotted her, and then the end came. As the outward man decayed, the inner man grew stronger and stronger. It was a privilege to sit by her bedside, to witness the holy joy, peace, and triumph, depicted in her very countenance, and to hear the expressions of joyous hope and lively confidence which fell from her lips.

On Friday, November 29th, 1867, the long expected day of deliverance dawned upon her soul.

In answer to the enquiry of a beloved Christian friend, our senior deacon, who visited her during the morning, she expressed herself as being very comfortable and requested him to pray with her. In the afternoon one of her sisters heard her repeating the lines:—

"Though painful at present, 'twill cease before long,
And then, O how pleasant the conqueror's song."

A short time after this, whilst attempting to partake of a little refreshment, the paleness of death was observed on her countenance, and in a few minutes, without a struggle, she passed away from earth to heaven, in the thirty-fifth year of her age.

"So fades a summer cloud away,
So sinks the gale when storms are o'er,
So gently shuts the eye of day,
So dies a wave along the shore."

Her remains were interred in the Bacup Cemetery, on December 4th. Her pastor, who had enjoyed her friendship upwards of sixteen years, and who feels a mournful pleasure in bearing this testimony to her Christian character, officiated on the solemn occasion. He also improved her death by a discourse founded on a passage selected by herself from 1 Cor. xv. 55—57. The sermon was preached first of all at Waterbarn (where our sister regularly worshipped) in the evening of Lord's Day, December 6th, and by special request was repeated on the two following Lord's Day evenings at Zion Chapel, Bacup, and at Waterfoot. On each occasion a large and deeply affected congregation attended. We earnestly pray that this brief record of her life and death may be blessed by the Holy Spirit of God to the conversion and salvation of others, and that our dear young friends especially may be constrained by the love of Christ to devote themselves, their all, to his service and praise. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth, yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them."

JOHN HOWE.

Waterbarn.

Poetry.

LYRICS FOR THE HEART.—"OUTSIDE THE DOOR."

BY W. POOLE BALFERN.

"Without are Dogs."—Rev. xxii. 15.

THE night was dark, the winds blew cold,
I stood outside the door,
My feet were worn, my back was bare,
And I was sick and poor;
I said, "O Jesus take me in,
O shield me from the blast,
Though I have oft thy mercy spurned,
O save my soul at last!

I heard a voice say, "take him in,"
The door was opened wide;
My fears were gone, I shelter found,
Beneath His wounded side;
I saw His eyes—soft beaming love,
I fell down at His feet,
He raised me and He healed my wound,
With kisses pure and sweet.

I looked at Him, my heart was furled,
I bled at every pore;
I thought of all my sins and fears
Outside that dreadful door;
But now that He has smiled on me,
And I have seen His face,
I hope to live to make Him known,—
Proclaim His wondrous grace.

"ETERNAL LIFE."

Are we renewed,
And sanctified,
And have we viewed,
The Lamb that died?
Then need we none of inly strife,
For we *possess* "Eternal Life."

We're born again,—
Born from above,
And shall remain
In endless love;
For love removes all fear and strife,
And brings the bliss of "Endless Life."

And we are kept
To glorify,
The Lamb that leapt,
From earth on high,
Where grief and joy have ended strife
And rapture fills "Eternal Life."

And as we lose
Earthly leaven,
The more we choose
Holy heaven;
For heaven *is* where banished strife
No more beclouds "Eternal Life."

Sunderland. J. K.

Page for the Young.

WISHING FOR GRANDFATHER'S EYES.

NEVER was little Myra better pleased than when going a walk with her grandfather; for he was so kind and gentle, and talked to her about the things they saw in so pleasant and cheerful a manner, that it was quite a treat to her.

If they saw any ants at work, "Oh! oh!" he would say, "what makes you so busy, when none of you have any rent or tax to pay? But I see how it is; you are at work for one another. Remember, Myra, we must not be idle; for when we have nothing to do for ourselves, we may always help other people."

If they saw a bee winging his way from flower to flower, he was almost sure to speak of it. "Well, Mr. Buzzabout, will you tell us what you are doing? But we understand it very well, and will learn a lesson from you. Mind, Myra, that as the bee gets honey from every flower, you and I get good from everything."

In this way Myra used to be entertained by her grandfather, who likened her to a fresh bud that would soon burst into a flower, and himself to a faded leaf which was almost ready to fall from the tree.

One day, after Myra had been a pleasant walk with her grandfather, she sat down to do a little sewing with her mother, and then they talked together in the following manner:—

"I wish I had grandfather's eyes, mother."

"Do you, dear? I hardly think that he could spare them. But what can you possibly want with the eyes of your grandfather, Myra?"

"Oh, if I had his eyes, I should see all that he sees when we are walking together; but now I cannot see half so much as he does."

"No!—that is very strange, when you are young and he is old. He often says that his sight is not what it used to be; and then, you know, though the Bible is in large print,

he is obliged to use spectacles."

"Yes, mother, but for all that he can see more than I can."

"Tell me what you mean, love, for I cannot at all understand you?"

"Why, when we walk out in the fields and lanes, let us look at what we will he says he sees God's goodness in everything."

"Ah, Myra, it is not grandfather's eyes, but grandfather's faith that you want. Pray to God to open the eyes of your understanding, to give you a heart to love and trust Him, and you will then see Him, not only in all the works of his hand, but in all the events of life."

A SPONGE, AND WHAT IT IS.

"What is sponge made of?" said Georgie, gasping, snuffling, and winking under his Croton Bath. No one near could tell him; and the maid suggested that he needn't be askin' such foolish questions, but just be still and get washt;" and so the matter ended.

Now listen, little Georgie, and I will tell you what a sponge is.

The very sponge which washes your face was brought up from the bottom of the ocean, and was part of a living animal. For a long time sponges were supposed to be plants. Messrs. Aggazis and Gould, in 1848, called them so; but later observations have decided them to be animals; and they are placed in the class Protoxa, the class most resembling plants.

When first found in the water, their appearance is very different from this which you now see. This is the skeleton only, the part corresponding to our bones. When this was a complete living thing, deep down under the ocean, it was covered all over the outside, and filled in every one of these little holes with a soft substance, something like the white of an egg, and this was like our flesh. It was fastened tightly to a rock; and its colour was a dull bluish black on the upper side, and a dirty white below. It was formerly supposed to be a plant, because it was always fast in one place; but, for other reasons, it is decidedly an animal. All through this mass is a regular circulation, like our blood and food. It has been seen to absorb nutritious matter—that is to eat, or rather, to drink. You see all over its surface orifices or holes; these communicate with each other all throughout. Into the largest of these, called pores, the sea-water is constantly entering, and out of the small ones called vents, it is regularly spouted out; and it doubtless finds in this sea-water minute animals which serve it for food, and increases its bulk.

And this strange animal produces others like itself. I will tell you how.

From the soft part a little globule is seen to float off, and, after moving about a while very briskly, here and there, as if looking for a place, it fastens itself to some rock. Next, gradually, begins to be seen the more solid skeleton (what we have here); the soft part increases, and so it grows; not very slowly either, for the divers find it at the end of three years, large enough to bring away.

To get these sponges from the the bottom of the ocean furnishes occupation for a great number of people. One thousand men are busy in the Ottoman Archipelago alone; and thousands besides, with many hundred boats, are engaged in the gulf of Machri, on the Barbary coast and elsewhere; so that in many villages there, from May to September, the best diving time, only old men, women, and children can be found.

The first kind is brought from the Ægean sea. At daylight there, in the summer time, when the water is pleasant, — for it requires smooth water,—the boats each with six or eight men and one pair of oars, will leave the shore, and proceed to where the water is eight or ten, or even thirty, fathoms deep; for those found in shallow water are very inferior.

Here they stop, and the divers prepare to descend. Each one puts a hoop around his neck, and to this fastens a bag, in which the sponges are put as they are gathered. In very deep water the diver uses a rope with a heavy stone to it. He sinks the stone to the spot he intends to reach, and thus it holds the rope steady, which he uses to assist himself in coming up again to the surface.

After being busy thus till noon, they return to some of those pleasant little nooks which abound on the shores of the Archipelago, to prepare what they have gathered for sale.

The first thing is to press out the soft part of the animal, and then to bleach the remainder in the sun; so they beat them, and stamp on them, and trample them till there is no more life left. The skeleton part is then washed, and spread in the sun until it is quite clean, and grows to be this dull yellowish colour; then it is picked in bags and sent to market for sale,—sent to all parts of Asia, Europe, and America, and mostly for washing purposes.

Little Georgie's mother, seeing a very nice piece, bought it for his use; and I think he will value her gift, and look on it with more pleasure, since he knows now what it is, and where it came from.

Intelligence.

AMERICA.

THE following letter from Dr. Eaton, of Madison University, to Dr. Stock, which has been kindly forwarded to us for publication, will, doubtless, be interesting to our readers:—

"DEAR BROTHER,

"YOUR visit to us left an altogether and highly favourable impression. Your excellent addresses and personal intercourse with brethren were adapted not only to attract respect and affection to yourself, but to strengthen the fraternal bond, between brethren of the same faith on both sides, *and, also, between the people of both countries.* There should be a closer sympathy between the Baptists of America, and *that class of Baptists in England, of whom you were the proper representative.* Your people should understand and be encouraged by the fact that the great body of Baptists in America are *one* with them in faith and ecclesiastical order, and, further, that there is no wavering among us in regard to the position we hold. We were never firmer on this ground, nor held it with more intelligent appreciation of its importance than at present. The active efforts made in behalf of Christian *Union* during a year or two past in this country, in some of which Baptists have participated, have resulted on the whole favourably to us. It has given us the opportunity, before the assembled representatives of other denominations in public meeting and discussion, to *speak for ourselves* in regard to our real position, and to state with all fullness, our reasons for stedfastly maintaining it. The effect has been to disabuse many candid minds of their prejudices against us on the ground of alleged *bigotry* and *narrow sectarianism*, and to convince them of our sincerity and *logical* consistency in adhering to our peculiar and distinctive principles as a denomination, and at the same time, of our genuine catholicity of Christian feeling. There have been some noble and generous utterances by the organs of other denominations in respect to the position of the Baptists. To be sure, there has been a good deal of a contrary character, but it has come from the smaller lights. It has been truly said that if the Baptists are right in their views of *baptism*, then *restricted* communion follows as a matter of course. The question between us and other denominations is narrowed down to this:—What is *Scriptural* baptism? It is hence our solemn conviction that, as a denomination, we are *set* for the defence of the ordinances of Christ in their integrity, as instituted by himself. And *here* we shall hold:—Not on *us*, but upon *those* who have *changed* these ordinances, rests the responsibility of *schism* in the body of Christ. I trust we shall maintain our ground in the Spirit of Christ; speaking the truth boldly, but in *love*, and heartily rejoicing in the advance of evangelical principles, under whatever auspices. Another happy effect of the discussion in connection with the efforts for *Christian* Union, is the better understanding among our own people of the *precise* ground of our separation from other evangelical denominations. This was much needed. There are thousands who have become Baptists from education and association as in other denominations, with no very distinct views as to the peculiarities of our ecclesiastical position. The attention of these has of late been called to these points, and they are made clearly to see that our stand-point as Baptists rests on *Scriptural* ground, and is a matter of principle, and not of bigotry or caprice. We are hence becoming more and more a *united* body in the truth, and are pre-

pared to make new advances on the kingdom of darkness with a more perfect concert, and more concentrated force. The prospects of the Baptists in America—ecclesiastical, educational, and religious—were never more hopeful and auspicious. May the Spirit of the Lord be poured out upon us in boundless measure, and to Him be all the glory. The religious outlook in other quarters is also heart-cheering to the lover of all who hold the head, and love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. The two great sections of the Presbyterian Church, long dis-united, originally on the question of the proper way to deal with slavery, and on several points of doctrine, are coming together in a mutual spirit of fraternal confidence, and will, doubtless, by next year, again become one body. Unquestionably, in proportion to their numbers, the Presbyterians in this country have the ablest and most learned ministry, and the wealthiest and most intelligent people of any denomination. Happily, too, they are eminently sound in evangelical doctrine, and so their influence is potent for good. Our *irrepressible* Methodist brethren are acting with great energy and success; in *numbers* they lead all other Christian sects, and are advancing rapidly in intelligence, culture, and wealth. The Baptists are *second* to the Methodists in numerical membership, *with a larger population under their ministry*.

"I greatly rejoice in every event which tends to strengthen the friendly relations between the English and the American people. The visits of several eminent representative men from your side since the close of our bloody civil strife, have powerfully tended to promote a good understanding, and a good feeling in the best of our people with regard to the English *people*. I say the English *people* in distinction from the English aristocracy. We expect nothing from the latter in the way of friendship or sympathy. If they treat our nation and government with ordinary *diplomatic courtesy*, it is all we hope for. But with the English *people* we earnestly desire, and fondly hope for the most friendly and cordial amity, and especially with the Christian portion. *The two people must never again come into a bloody war with each other.* Causes of misunderstanding, and collisions of interests must be obviated by a more constant intercourse of the best and most influential minds of the two nations. The visits and addresses of such men as Goldwin Smith, Dr. McCosh, Newman Hall, and others, have been productive of the most essential service. Through them, the hearts of our people have been drawn nearer to those of their kinsmen (represented by them) on the other side of the great water. The visit of Dickens too, though of quite another purpose and spirit, will not be without its value in bringing the two people nearer to each other. Dickens will return to England with 200,000 dols. or £40,000 gathered from American pockets, and 'for value received' we are willing to allow. He is greatly delighting the best society among us, by his readings of his own productions, already familiar as household words in almost every family in our land. I hope his well-filled pockets will make him very 'sweet' on us in his second instalment of 'American Notes' which he is reported as preparing. We have forgiven and forgotten the unhandsome things said of us in his first instalment a quarter of a century ago.

"But what of *Fenianism?* This has become a very serious disturbing element with you, and to some extent with us, I foresee the possibility of its creating considerable dissatisfaction among the English people toward us; but it should be understood that Fenianism is a *foreign* element; it has been imported from Ireland, and its inspiration comes from that quarter. The American people at large have no affinity or sympathy with it. We detest and abhor as much as Englishmen its bloody and murderous outbreaks. The danger with us is the use which politicians or demagogues may make of it. Both our great political parties need the Fenian vote, and will to some extent curry favour with the faction. There have been expressions on the part of some of our public men in this direction which are much to be deprecated; but they do not express the popular sentiments? Our people are quite willing to adopt the view respecting this whole movement from the leaders of the liberal party on your side. We have long held to the conviction that Ireland has not been wisely and properly dealt with by the English Government, and that a change for the better is imperatively demanded. It is this conviction which furnishes the only captital to the Fenians to work on among us, but from this it must not be inferred that our government or people have any sympathy or favour to show to the enterprise or measures of the active Fenians of the present time.

"Our political 'situation' I am sorry to say is still far from being satisfactory. The antagonism between the President and Congress is complete and exceedingly bitter, and thereby 'Reconstruction' is greatly retarded. The President is stub-

bornly and passionately doing all he can to thwart Congress in its measures to reconstruct the rebel states. He has gone over fully to the Democratic party, or rather to the *Rebel* party. In the meantime Congress is firm and resolved to carry out its plan, and for this purpose it is feared, by not a few Conservative Republicans that some questionable measures have been adopted to head off the scheming of the President and his abettors. Many of this class staid away from the polls at the late elections, and let the Democratic party gain some important victories. This was certainly not true patriotism, but it was alleged that nothing but such a result would arrest the *radical* element in Congress and the Republican party which its majority represent, in its headlong course. However this may be, one thing is certain, that the victories of the Democrats at the last election have ensured the nomination of General Grant by the Republican party. I regard his nomination as a virtual election. The Democrats cannot put forward any man of their party that will come in sight of Grant in a popular election. The present hope of the best men in the country rests upon the elevation of our great General to the Presidency. He is *radical* enough for the people, and unbounded confidence is reposed in his integrity and patriotism and in his practical sagacity and true statesmanship.

"When will English travellers who write books about America come to understand American society? Hepworth Dixon's book seems to be written in a friendly spirit, and yet no greater mistake was ever made and no greater libel upon the good sense, morals, and religion of American society ever perpetrated, than his noting the '*Oneida Community*' and the *Mormons* as illustrations of the *religious tendencies* of the American people!!

"A more preposterous *non-sequitur* never emerged from the most muddled of brains. These monstrous developments of human depravity did not come out of any *tendencies* in American character or society. The Oneida Community live some 16 miles from this place, in the same county. They have been there more than a quarter of a century and number between 200 or 300. They form no part of American society and have no social relation outside of their enclosure except relations of *traffic* may be called social. They sell the produce of their industry and accumulate property without forming any other connection with outside people. Parties of pleasure frequently call there to partake of pleasant repasts which they serve up, but as a community they are completely *isolated*. There is no *tendency* of society in that direction, much less a religious one. And the Mormons—why they would have died out long ago, had it not been for continual accessions from *foreign* lands. *Religious tendencies* of American society indeed! O Hepworth Dixon! But I have written already too much for me. Yours in Christian love,

"GEO. W. EATON."

SOHO CHAPEL, OXFORD-ST., LONDON.

ON Tuesday evening, February 11th, the twenty-eighth anniversary of the Sabbath School connected with this place was held, and was largely attended. A considerable number of friends partook of tea, after which, Mr. Wilkins the pastor, took the chair at half-past Six o'clock. Mr. Attwood opened the meeting with prayer. The chairman then addressed a few words of hearty welcome to the assembled audience and called upon Mr. Freeman (in the place of Mr. Hall) to read the report, which was one of a most simple and unadorned character. From it we learn that the school has had a year of useful labour and encouraging prosperity. The number of scholars is sixty-five boys and sixty-eight girls whose attendance average morning sixty-four; afternoon, ninety-three. The number of teachers is eighteen, twelve of whom are members of the church. Six teachers have been baptised by Mr. Wilkin during the past year, three who were recently scholars also have been baptised and added to the church during the same period. This we regard as a favourable and encouraging feature of the Report, showing not only the blessing attending Sabbath School instruction but also the harmony between the school and the church in point of effort and sentiment. The library of the school has been used to an unusual extent during the year, and the circulation of healthy magazine literature has extended to nearly 4,000 copies. A prosperous and well attended Bible class is held on Monday evenings conducted by the pastor. With regard to the Strict Baptist Mission it was reported that the sum of £14 had been collected

from all sources during the year, showing a lively interest in this mission at Soho Chapel and Sunday School. After adverting to various meetings in connection with the school the report concluded by a financial statement showing that while the receipts had amounted to £27 2s. 10d., the expenditure had been but £22 8s. 1d., thus reducing the balance due last year to the treasurer to £13 10s. 9d.

The adoption of the Report was moved by Mr. Wall, of Gravesend, seconded by Mr. Box, of Woolwich, and carried unanimously. Mr. D. Crumpton then gave an address on education in general and Sunday school education in particular, showing that the present tendency to ignore the voluntary efforts of religious people and to depreciate Biblical teaching was a dangerous sign of the times. He thought that Bible truth was the great want of the day. Mr. S. Milner then followed in a few vigorous and graphic remarks bringing out this fact in a striking light. Education alone and by itself he regarded as tending to facilitate the commission of crime rather than the reverse, unless accompanied with the restraint of moral principle. Education may be made subsidiary to the inculcation of religious errors of every discription. Even education in God's truth needs God's spirit to accompany it, or else the taught, while knowing the right will still prefer the wrong. Yet it is important to teach the truth to the young, the outcry against creeds being either hypocritical or foolish. Sovereignty, he contended, overrides all religious training which was both a caution in one sense and an encouragement in another. The meeting, which was a crowded one, was concluded with prayer by Mr. G. Wyard. Several anthems were admirably sung by the scholars during the evening and were listened to with much interest.

WEST BROMWICH.

THE Baptist friends, West Bromwich, held their annual tea meeting on Monday, December 29th, 1867. After tea, a public meeting was held, when Joseph Cooksey, Esq., (Independent), was voted to the chair. The chairman congratulated his Baptist friends on the great change and improvements they had made in their sanctuary, and wished them every blessing in the future. The entertainment which followed consisted of music, readings, recitations and addresses. The evening was found by all to have been a thoroughly enjoyable one. The aged were profited and the young were delighted. The proceeds from the tea were £13, which were appropriated to the liquidation of the debt incurred by the recent alterations.

[The above was unintentionally omitted last month.—ED.]

MARRIAGE.

EVANS—BARLOW.—February 5th, in the Baptist Chapel, Sunnyside, by the Rev. Abraham Nichols, late pastor of the church, assisted by the Rev. W. G. Fifield, of Goodshaw, the Rev. Thomas Evans, minister of the place, to Martha Ann, eldest daughter of Mr. Henry Barlow, manufacturer, Albert Terrace, Crawshawbooth, near Rawtenstall, Lancashire.

RECEIVED FOR THE SAXON MISSION.

MR. GEISSLER.	£	s.	d.
Mr. G. L. Hiley, Penybent, Llanelly..	2	10	0
Mrs. Sarah Gibson, Auchencairn.....	0	10	0
H. Everest, Esq., Rochester	0	10	0

RECEIVED FOR THE BAPTIST TRACT SOCIETY.

By the TREASURER.	£	s.	d.
Mr. David Bennett, Dundee.....S.	0	5	0
H. Everest, Esq., Rochester.....S.	1	0	0
Mr. T. Pillow, London .....S.	0	10	0
Commander Mason, R.N., Belvidere, Clevedon .....S.	0	5	0
Rev. T. King, Semley, (two years) S.	1	0	0
By Mr. WHITEHEAD.			
Mr. Daniel Stewart, Broughty Ferry, near Dundee	0	7	0
Mr. Hy. Murton, Newcastle-on-Tyne S.	0	5	0
Derby.			
Thomas Oakley, Esq. .....S.	0	5	0
E. Johnson, Esq. .....S.	0	5	0
Frederick Thompson, Esq..... ..S.	0	5	0
Mr. Samuel Bennett .....S.	0	5	0
Mr. E. C. Ellis .....S.	0	5	0